

# Downers Grove Groundwater Investigation

## Fact Sheet #2 October 2001

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



489228

Downers Grove, Illinois

### Background

Illinois EPA continues to investigate groundwater contamination in the areas of unincorporated Downers Grove. During the week of September 10-13, Illinois EPA sample teams took 169 more private well samples. The samples were taken primarily in an area south of Maple Street and east of Belmont with a few samples north of Maple and some west of Belmont. See Area 4 (the new sampling area) and Area 1 on the [site map](#). (JPG 200K file)

During the spring of 2001, the Illinois EPA began a groundwater investigation just east of I-355 near Downers Grove. This investigation is in response to citizen concerns related to recent private well sampling in neighboring Lisle. Results of a few samples in Downers Grove in May showed some solvent contamination in scattered wells. Consequently, Illinois EPA decided to initiate a separate investigation in Downers Grove to identify contaminated wells and potential sources.

The Illinois EPA collected samples from private water wells in unincorporated Downers Grove during the week of July 16, 2001. The results from these samples constituted the first phase of the Downers Grove Groundwater Investigation. In this first round of sampling, approximately 160 wells, in three areas, were analyzed for levels of solvent-type chemicals, known as volatile organic chemicals (VOCs).

#### **What areas of unincorporated Downers Grove did Illinois EPA sample in September (Round 2)?**

During the week of September 10-13, 169 well samples were taken, primarily in the new Area 4 on the attached map (south of Maple and east of Belmont). Some samples were taken north of Maple and some in Area 1 west of Belmont.

#### **What areas were sampled in July (Round 1) of the Downers Grove Groundwater Investigation?**

Area 1) Elmore and Inverness generally bound this study area on the north, Belmont on the east, 59th Street on the south and Walnut on the west.

Area 2) A second area is north of Burlington between Granville and Edwards, and generally extends about one block north and south.

Area 3) The third area tested is bounded by 63rd on the north, Main on the east, 67th on the south and Saratoga on the west.

#### **What did the test results for the most recent sampling show?**

The larger area, Area (#4), shows that many wells contain tetrachloroethylene (PCE), trichloroethylene (TCE) and other related VOCs. Sixty percent of the wells in this area show PCE or TCE contamination above the federal drinking water standards.

#### **Is the investigation in Downers Grove related to the ongoing investigation in Lisle?**

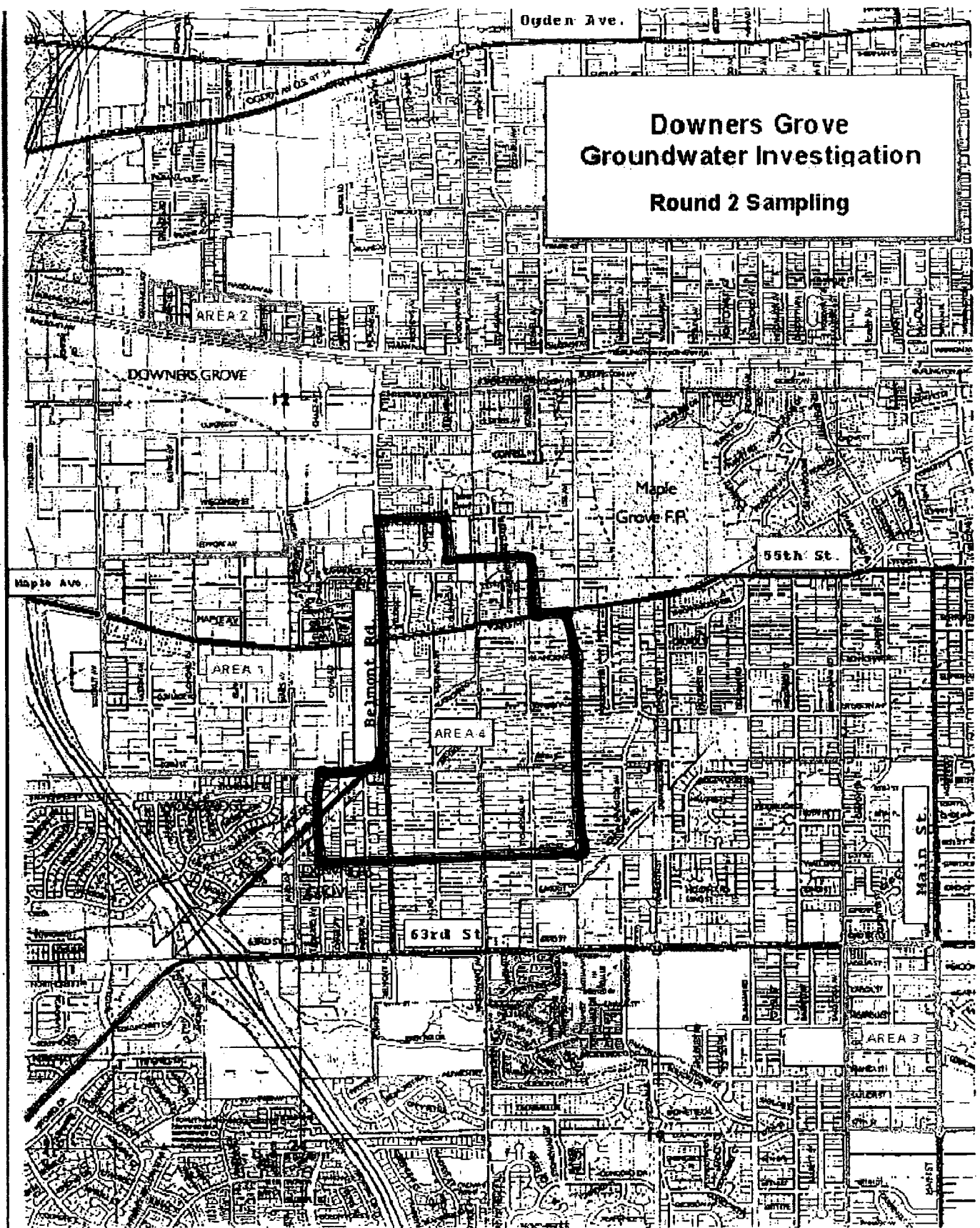
The Illinois EPA is approaching the groundwater investigation in Downers Grove as a separate investigation. We have no information so far to connect it to groundwater contamination in Lisle. The results of two rounds of sampling in Downers Grove (July and Sept. 2001) show the presence of up to five chemicals, rather than primarily one chemical, trichloroethylene (TCE), found in the Lisle study.

#### **Do you know the source of the contamination?**

No, we do not have enough information yet to identify the source(s) of contamination. We are conducting an area-wide investigation to determine the nature and extent of contamination and possible source(s) of contamination. Illinois EPA is investigating possible sources of contamination both by physically sampling the groundwater and by performing records searches and interviews with local businesses. We have sent information request letters to many local businesses.

#### **What are the levels of VOCs in the main study area?**

Of the approximately 270 samples in the main study areas (Areas #1 and #4) 140 results were greater than the federal drinking water standards for public water supplies - five parts per billion for both PCE and TCE. Other VOCs were detected at lower levels. (Although these standards are not enforceable for private wells, Illinois EPA and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) use them as a comparison level regarding the safety of private water wells).



Downers Grove Township and Lisle Township Map